



Metro Vancouver Transit Police 2020 Awards



METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT POLICE AWARDS 2020

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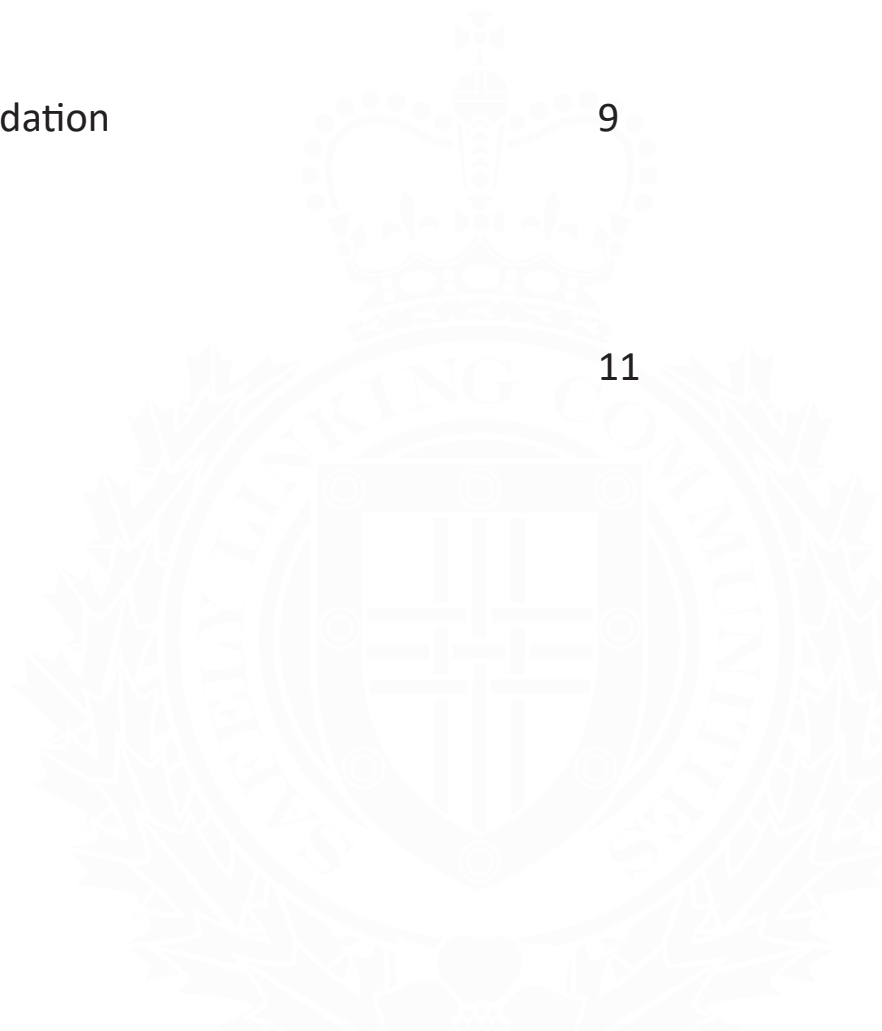
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Police Exemplary Service Medals and Commissions

The Police Exemplary Service Program recognizes police officers for long and exemplary Canadian police service in qualifying Canadian police forces. Each of our recipients today has dedicated 20 or 30 years of service to keeping our communities safe.



Photo (l-r): Sergeant Carol-Anne Tarnowsky, Constable Kim Harder, Inspector CJ Kyle, Constable Paul Milne and Sergeant Dale Hemm.

Appointment as a Commissioned Officer by the Province of British Columbia for exemplary service:

Congratulations to Inspector CJ Kyle on getting appointed as a Commissioned Officer by the Province of British Columbia.

Receiving the first and second bar to the Police Exemplary Service Medal, recognizing 40 years of service:

Congratulations to Sergeant Dale Hemm for completing 40 years of exemplary service.

Receiving the first bar to the Police Exemplary Service Medal, recognizing 30 years of service:

Congratulations to Sergeant Carol-Anne Tarnowsky, Constable Kim Harder and Constable Paul Milne for completing 30 years of exemplary service.

Inspector Commendations

A Squad

On January 30, 2019, A Squad was completing their shift at headquarters when they were redeployed to support the response efforts after Constable Harms was shot at Scott Road Station. Officers helped secure the scene and were placed at key locations for containment, while Surrey RCMP pursued the suspect. Officers also assisted with traffic control over the Pattullo Bridge and surrounding streets during the busy rush hour traffic. They remained in place well into the evening to support the coordinated efforts. For offering their support to Transit Police and Surrey RCMP on scene, and providing assistance in any way required during a critical incident, A Squad was presented with an Inspector Unit Commendation.



Photo: Staff Sergeant Troy Henyecz accepted the Inspector Commendation on behalf of A Squad.

B Squad

On January 30, 2019, B Squad was out on patrol when the Scott Road shooting took place and immediately redeployed to support the response efforts at and around the SkyTrain station. Officers helped secure the scene and were placed at key locations for containment while Surrey RCMP pursued the suspect. Officers also assisted with traffic control on the surrounding streets during the busy rush hour traffic. They remained in place well into the evening to support the coordinated efforts. For responding to a critical incident involving a significant injury to a member of their team, and demonstrating poise and the highest level of professionalism while working alongside our jurisdictional policing partners at the scene, B Squad was presented with an Inspector Unit Commendation.



Photo: Sergeant Martin Hurst accepted the Inspector Commendation on behalf of B Squad.

Inspector Commendations

General Investigation Unit

On January 30, 2019, the General Investigation Unit was immediately deployed to support Surrey RCMP with their investigative efforts after Constable Josh Harms was shot at Scott Road SkyTrain Station. Officers attended the SkyTrain Operations and Maintenance Centre to obtain video recordings while also working with the Transit Police Operations Communications Centre to obtain audio recordings of the incident. These files were then provided to the Surrey RCMP. For responding to a critical incident involving a significant injury to a member of their team and ensuring that our jurisdictional policing partners received all of the information required for their investigation, the General Investigations Unit was presented with an Inspector Unit Commendation.



Photo: Sergeant Alan Marsland accepted the Inspector Commendation on behalf of the General Investigation Unit.

Operations Communications Centre

On January 30, 2019, our Operations Communications Centre saw an immediate and intense increase in activity in the hours following the shooting of Constable Josh Harms. In addition to dispatching multiple units for an immediate response, the OCC coordinated communications between Transit Police, Surrey RCMP, Air 1, K9 Units and the Emergency Response Team. Due to an increase in communications required on scene, as well as the need to maintain dispatch services across the transit system, multiple OCC Operators who were off duty, took their own initiative and came into the office to back-up their colleagues. They assisted with video processing, audio recording processing and performing required scribe duties. For responding to a critical incident involving a significant injury to a police officer and assisting with a large joint-agency operation, while still maintaining police services across the Metro Vancouver transit system, the Operations Communications Centre was presented with an Inspector Unit Commendation.



Photo: Police Communications Operator Michelle Rotella accepted the Inspector Commendation on behalf of the Operations Communications Centre.

Inspector Commendations

Sergeant Clint Hampton

On January 30, 2019, the Scott Road Station shooting attracted significant and immediate media attention from major international news outlets. Sergeant Clint Hampton began to field numerous media inquiries within 10 minutes of the shooting, and spent several hours working with Surrey RCMP to inform the media about the status on scene and advising the public about the critical importance of staying out of the area as the manhunt for the suspect was underway. Later that same evening, he attended Surrey RCMP detachment and participated in a high profile press conference concerning the incident and the status of Constable Harms. For his exceptional performance as Media Relations Officer, filling the essential role of being the face of Transit Police during one of the most difficult situations a police agency can experience, Sergeant Clint Hampton was presented with an Inspector Commendation.



Photo: Media Relations Officer Sergeant Clint Hampton.

Constable Nicholas Johnson

In 2020, Constable Nicholas Johnson created a training presentation for Compass Card investigations, outlining how an officer would proceed with an investigation where a Compass Card could be used to identify and locate suspects. The presentation has since been used during cycle training internally, the Regional Duty Officer meeting and the Transit Police Memorandum of Understanding and Jurisdictional Police Department Protocol meetings. After the JPD meeting, Constable Johnson was asked to present to officers at both North Vancouver and Surrey RCMP. For helping train Transit Police officers and other Jurisdictional Police Departments on how to use Compass Card information in their investigations, and supporting partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, Constable Nicholas Johnson was presented with an Inspector Commendation.



Photo: Constable Nicholas Johnson.

Inspector Commendations

Linda Tobias

Linda Tobias was the sole Communications Advisor on January 30, 2019, due to a vacancy in Strategic Services. As such, she was responsible for monitoring the hundreds of messages flooding into Transit Police over social media that evening, responding where necessary and supporting the Media Relations Officer with directing media requests. In the days following the incident, she assisted in distributing updates on Constable Harms' status via the website and on social media, and spent countless hours recording all related social media messages, including messages of support from police agencies worldwide. For dedicating significant time, over and above her regular duties, to ensuring that Transit Police remained responsive to the public and the media, while continuing to fulfill the responsibilities of two Communications Advisor positions, Linda Tobias was presented with an Inspector Commendation.



Photo: Communications Advisor Linda Tobias.

Jackaline Waugh

Police Communications Operator Jackaline Waugh was working as the Information Officer for the East Division on the afternoon of January 30, 2019. Immediately following the shooting at Scott Road SkyTrain Station, the volume of communications coming into the Operations Communications Centre increased dramatically. Jackaline quickly identified the need to take on scribe duties for the event's dispatcher and was freed from her role as Info Officer to take on this additional work. In addition to performing the role of scribe, she also provided notifications to the Surrey RCMP and K9 teams, supporting dispatch in a variety of capacities. For fully supporting the lead dispatcher during a period of prolonged and intense activity, Jackaline Waugh was presented with an Inspector Commendation.



Photo: Police Communications Operator Jackaline Waugh.

Inspector Commendations

Amanda Smith

Police Communications Operator Amanda Smith was the Information Operator for the West Division on the afternoon of January 30, 2019. Immediately following the Scott Road SkyTrain shooting, the volume of communications coming into the Operations Communications Centre increased dramatically. Amanda patched both East and West channels, which freed up Jackaline Waugh, who was needed to serve as the incident scribe. Amanda performed the duties of two Information Operators, providing updates on the incident and on Constable Harms' condition. She also requested that New Westminster Police clear the Pattullo Bridge so that Emergency Services could quickly travel to Royal Columbian Hospital. For stepping up and quickly taking on two concurrent and essential roles following the shooting of a fellow employee, Amanda Smith was presented with an Inspector Commendation.



Photo: Police Communications Operator Amanda Smith.



Deputy Chief Officer Commendations

Dennis Telan

Police Communications Operator Dennis Telan was working on East Dispatch on the afternoon of January 30, 2019, and became the main dispatcher following the shooting at Scott Road SkyTrain Station. Following the incident, the volume of communications coming into the OCC increased dramatically. To ensure continuity of the incident, Dennis extended his shift by six hours and acted as a central liaison for communications with Surrey RCMP, Air 1, K9 Units and the Emergency Response Team. For making himself available for a prolonged period of intense activity, and ensuring clear and consistent communications between agency partners and our officers at the scene, Dennis Telan was presented with a Deputy Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Communications Operator Dennis Telan

Constable Mohammad Waled

In 2019, Constable Mohammad Waled was instrumental in the success of a two-day visit by military and police representatives from Qatar. The Qatar government specifically asked to meet with our organization to learn how to establish a transit police service that provides policing in and around a vast transit network. This experience will assist Qatar in how they provide policing during the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Constable Waled, who is fluent in Arabic, provided translation services and hospitality to the Qatar delegation over the two-day event, while on and off duty. He was in Block III at the Justice Institute and took time away from his studies to review and familiarize himself with the presentations, while still completing his course work during that period. For going beyond the call of duty, and for his commitment and professionalism, Constable Mohammad Waled was presented with a Deputy Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Mohammad Waled.

Deputy Chief Officer's Commendations

Sandra Boleak

In 2019, Executive Assistant Sandra Boleak was instrumental in the success of a two-day visit by military and police representatives from Qatar. The Qatar government specifically asked to meet with our organization to learn how to establish a transit police service that provides policing in and around a vast transit network. This experience will assist Qatar how they provide policing during the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Sandra created the two-day agenda for the visit and maintained regular contact with a Qatari representative at the Washington, D.C., consulate to facilitate flight and accommodations during the visit to Vancouver. She also provided logistical support, organized refreshments while being mindful to cultural sensitivities, and was present throughout the event to ensure its success. For going beyond the call of duty in making the Qatar delegation's visit a success, Sandra Boleak was presented with a Deputy Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Sandra Boleak.

Chief Officer Commendations

Constable Andrew Baelde

On January 30, 2019, Constable Andrew Baelde arrived at the Scott Road Station SkyTrain platform seconds after the shooting of Constable Josh Harms. He quickly worked to secure the scene to safeguard the well-being of nearby passengers while also ensuring that Cst. Harms received appropriate medical attention from SkyTrain staff. He then pursued the suspect outside the station, providing important details to Surrey RCMP and other Transit Police officers who arrived on the scene shortly thereafter. For putting himself at risk of significant injury in helping his fellow officer, transit employees and passengers, as well as pursuing an armed and dangerous suspect, Constable Andrew Baelde was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Andrew Baelde.

Constable Tom Clarkson

On January 30, 2019, Constable Tom Clarkson arrived at the Scott Road Station SkyTrain platform seconds after the shooting of Constable Josh Harms. He quickly worked to secure the scene to safeguard the well-being of nearby passengers while also ensuring that Cst. Harms received appropriate medical attention from SkyTrain staff. He then pursued the suspect outside the station, providing important details to Surrey RCMP and other Transit Police officers who arrived on scene shortly thereafter. For putting himself at risk of significant injury in helping his fellow officer, transit employees and passengers, as well as pursuing an armed and dangerous suspect, Constable Tom Clarkson was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Tom Clarkson.

Chief Officer Commendations

Constable Chris Elvidge

On January 30, 2019, Constable Chris Elvidge was on the Scott Road Station SkyTrain platform during the shooting of Constable Josh Harms. In the minutes following the shooting, Cst. Elvidge quickly worked to secure the scene to safeguard the well-being of nearby passengers while also ensuring that Cst. Harms received appropriate medical attention from SkyTrain staff. He then pursued the suspect outside the station, providing important details to Surrey RCMP and other Transit Police officers who arrived on scene shortly thereafter. For putting himself at risk of significant injury in helping his fellow officer, transit employees and passengers, as well as pursuing an armed and dangerous suspect, Constable Chris Elvidge was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Chris Elvidge.

Constable Josh Harms

No one exemplified the values of Transit Police more than Constable Josh Harms himself. Immediately after being shot twice on January 30, 2019, Cst. Harms returned fire and briefly pursued the suspect to ensure the safety of the public and his fellow officers. Cst. Harms remained calm and collected while interacting with his fellow Transit Police officers, RCMP on scene and the SkyTrain Attendants who performed first aid. In the hours, weeks and months of recovery that followed, Cst. Harms' primary concern was with his colleagues, continually checking in with his squad to boost their morale.

During the subsequent RCMP investigation, Cst. Harms was commended by the officers in charge for being "articulate, professional, prepared, careful, descriptive and fair." For putting the welfare of his team and all of Transit Police first, despite the challenges of recovering from a critical incident that put his own life in jeopardy, Constable Josh Harms was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Josh Harms.

Chief Officer Commendations

Constable Dustin Heywood

On October 12, 2019, Constables Robin Randhawa and Dustin Heywood came upon a vehicle completely engulfed in flames near Braid SkyTrain Station. Both officers immediately sprang into action, at great risk to their own personal safety, and removed both the driver and passenger from the burning vehicle. They then began to extinguish the fire, prioritizing the public's safety, while also ensuring that both the driver and passenger received appropriate care until the paramedics arrived. For putting himself at significant risk of peril in order to save the lives of two people, Constable Dustin Heywood was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Dustin Heywood.

Constable Robin Randhawa

On October 12, 2019, Constables Robin Randhawa and Dustin Heywood came upon a vehicle completely engulfed in flames near Braid SkyTrain Station. Both officers immediately sprang into action, at great risk to their own personal safety, and removed both the driver and passenger from the burning vehicle. They then began to extinguish the fire, prioritizing the public's safety, while also ensuring that both the driver and passenger received appropriate care until the paramedics arrived. For putting himself at significant risk of peril in order to save the lives of two people, Constable Robin Randhawa was presented with a Chief Officer Commendation.



Photo: Constable Robin Randhawa.



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